

Judge Lawrence B. Hagel

United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

Judge Lawrence B. Hagel was appointed a Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims by President George Bush in December 2003.

Before his appointment, Judge Hagel served as the General Counsel of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, a congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to advocating for veterans of the armed forces who have a disease or injury of the spinal cord.

Judge Hagel was born in Washington, Indiana. In 1965 he was appointed a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1969. In 1976 he earned his J.D. degree from the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law, and in 1983 he received his master of laws degree (with highest honors) in labor law from The National Law Center at George Washington University.

Upon graduation from the Naval Academy, Judge Hagel was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps. His service in the Marines included both operational and legal assignments, including service in Vietnam as an infantry platoon commander and a field advisor to a Vietnamese infantry battalion. For outstanding military service Judge Hagel was awarded the Combat Action Ribbon, the Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal.

During the 14 years prior to his appointment, Judge Hagel was involved extensively in legal issues relating to veterans benefits. He has served as a member of the Administrative Conference of the United States (1995); Steering Committee, District of Columbia Bar Administrative Law and Agency Practice Section (1999-2003); U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims Rules Advisory Committee (1992-2003); Executive Board of the Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program (1992-2003); Federal Bar Association, Veterans Law Committee Section, of which he was the Chair from 1994-1995.